

**CHINESE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA INC (CCAT)
LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL 2024
SPEECH BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
PARLIAMENT HOUSE LAWNS, SALAMANCA PLACE,
SUNDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2024**

NEE HAOW; meaning: 'hello'.

And GONG SHEE FAH TSAI; meaning: 'I wish you prosperity'.

I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose Country we gather, who flourished on Country as part of the South-East Nation of Aboriginal people. We honour them, and today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea, and waters.

I am very pleased to be joining you for this important celebration and I thank the Chinese Community Association of Tasmania for inviting me and my husband, Professor Chalmers, to be here today.

This New Year marks the beginning of the Year of the Dragon.

I understand that the Dragon represents important attributes – including strength, wisdom and nobility. The world needs these qualities: I hope that this year may bring us all strength, wisdom and nobility.

Our celebrations to mark the Lunar New Year in Australia are among the largest anywhere in the world outside Asia.

In Tasmania, Lunar New Year festivities have become an important event in our calendar. This reflects the increasingly multicultural nature of our Tasmanian society. More than 15 per cent of Tasmania's population was born overseas.

Also, after English, the most common languages used in homes in our State are Mandarin and Nepali.

While the Lunar New Year celebration is the most important cultural event for our Chinese community, it is also celebrated by many other communities, including from Thailand, Vietnam, Korea and Malaysia. I am very pleased that these Lunar New Year celebrations are being shared with these communities in Tasmania and with all Tasmanians.

I understand that 2024 marks the tenth year that our Chinese Community Association of Tasmania has organised these Lunar New Year festivities. May I congratulate the Association for making this another wonderful occasion and for making these celebrations so inclusive.

This Lunar New Year is a time for family to come together in a spirit of celebration. The events today offer cultural performances, entertainment and fine food to help us all celebrate. For those of you who may be apart from your families and loved ones, I am sure you will find friendship and community among our Tasmanian community.

May I wish you all the very best for today and for the Year of the Dragon to come.

Thank you.